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NEWS
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Week of March 11, 1974

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The Local Angle:

REGIONAL INFORMATION OFFICES

The U.S. Department of Labor operates through 10 regional offices located in major cities across the country. If you want a local angle on a news or feature story provided through this service--or have a direct news inquiry--you may contact one of the offices listed below. This listing includes the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the Assistant Regional Directors for Information and the states in their regions:

Region I	Paul F. Neal Room E-308 JFK Federal Bldg. Boston, Mass. 02203 617-223-6767	Connecticut Maine Massachusetts New Hampshire Rhode Island Vermont
Region II	Edward I. Weintraub Room 3510 1515 Broadway New York, N.Y. 10036 212-971-5477	New Jersey New York Puerto Rico Virgin Islands
Region III	John P. Hord 14280 Gateway Bldg. 3535 Market St. Philadelphia, Pa. 19104 215-597-1139	Delaware District of Columbia Maryland Pennsylvania Virginia West Virginia
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Region V	John D. Mellott 12th Floor 300 S. Wacker Drive Chicago, Ill. 60606 312-353-6976	Illinois Indiana Michigan Minnesota Ohio Wisconsin
Region VI	Les Gaddie Federal Bldg. & U.S. Courthouse Room 7C42 1100 Commerce St. Dallas, Tex. 75202 214-749-2308	Arkansas Louisiana New Mexico Oklahoma Texas
Region VII	Neal A. Johnson Federal Office Bldg. Room 1904 911 Walnut St. Kansas City, Mo. 64106 816-374-5481	Iowa Kansas Missouri Nebraska
Region VIII	Ernest E. Sanchez Room 16408 Federal Bldg. 1961 Stout St. Denver, Co. 80202 303-837-4234	Colorado Montana North Dakota South Dakota Utah Wyoming
Region IX	Tor Torland Room 10007 Federal Bldg. 450 Golden Gate Ave. San Francisco, Calif. 94102 415-556-3423	Arizona California Hawaii Nevada
Region X	Ernest Hood Arcade Plaza Room 2034 1321 Second Ave. Seattle, Wash. 98101 296-442-7620	Alaska Idaho Oregon Washington

LABOR DEPARTMENT PREPARED TO REJECT JOB
SAFETY, HEALTH PLAN PROPOSED BY VIRGINIA

WASHINGTON -- Assistant Secretary of Labor John H. Stender said he will reject Virginia's proposed job safety and health plan unless it is made at least as effective as the federal program.

In a Feb. 14 letter to Edmond M. Boggs, commissioner of Virginia's Department of Labor and Industry, Stender pointed to "defects in ... (the Virginia plan's) enforcement provisions" as a major reason for rejection.

Stender, head of the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), said his agency will continue to operate the federal program in Virginia.

The Virginia plan is being rejected, Stender said, largely because it provides enforcement exclusively through criminal penalties. Compliance with federal occupational safety and health laws is obtained almost exclusively under civil codes although criminal penalties are provided for willful or repeated violation causing the death of an employee.

Stender said enforcement of the law under criminal statutes is "more burdensome and cumbersome, and therefore less effective than operating under a civil system.

"Therefore, the commonwealth fails the basic 'at least as effective' test," he declared.

He pointed out that under the proposed exclusively criminal statutes, employees would be virtually barred from the appeal process, and would be unable to legally protest abatement periods.

Abatement periods are the times granted for employers to correct a workplace hazard. Under the federal system, employees may appeal these periods, and it is usually possible to obtain an abatement period acceptable to all parties.

(MORE)

"With cases pending in criminal courts, it would be impossible to enter into this type of negotiation," Stender said.

Stender said the Virginia plan also makes no distinction between serious and nonserious violations.

Commonwealth officials were given until March 1 to provide assurances they would amend Virginia's plan. Otherwise, Stender said, OSHA will commence formal rejection proceedings, the first against any state.

The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 provides for states to develop and operate their own programs, provided they are "at least as effective as" the federal program. The federal government pays half the operating costs of approved plans and 90 percent of the cost of developing a plan.

Twenty-three state plans have been approved and cover more than 50 percent of the nation's workers who are protected by the job safety law.

Stender noted that state operations are continously monitored to assure they live up to the requirements established by OSHA.

# # #

Week of March 11, 1974

NEBRASKA COMPANY FINED $5,000 IN FIRST CRIMINAL SUIT UNDER FEDERAL SAFETY LAW

OMAHA -- A Millard, Neb., construction company, convicted Jan. 28 in the U.S. government's first criminal suit brought under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, has been fined $5,000 by U.S. District Court Judge Albert B. Schatz.

A jury in Omaha convicted Turcon Construction Co., Inc., on one count of "willful violation" of the act's trench shoring standard, which caused the death of an employee of the firm. Such offenses carry penalties of up to $10,000 in fines. In addition to the $5,000 penalty, Turcon was ordered to pay $1,073 in costs.

The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) administers and enforces the federal Act to safeguard the safety and health of the country's workers.

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Week of March 11, 1974

MANPOWER RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

WASHINGTON -- Are you interested in a study of black colleges to determine their capability to deal with the problems of unemployment?

Or a study on "Employment of Ghetto Residents" or in a study of a local Job Bank program?

How about a dissertation on work and the organization of lifestyle?

The Labor Department's Manpower Administration has recently issued a catalog of research projects, which lists such titles.

"Manpower Research and Development Projects" lists 455 projects and more than 200 dissertations and reports in the works or completed in 1973. It also lists all such projects completed in the past three years.

The catalog is the principal means of informing the public about current research in the manpower field. It is of particular use to federal and state research and development personnel, manpower agency officials and staff, academicians, prospective applicants for grants and contracts, and industrial and personnel relations people.

Copies of the catalog may be obtained without charge by contacting the Manpower Administration, Room 10007, Patrick Henry Building, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, D.C. 20213. The phone number is (202) 376-6730.

# # #

MONTHLY AREA EMPLOYMENT TRENDS FOR FEBRUARY

WASHINGTON -- The number of labor areas with "substantial unemployment" (6 percent or more) remained at 33 in February for the fourth consecutive month, the Department of Labor reported.

This continues to be the lowest number of major labor areas on the list since August 1970, when there were 31.

Of the 150 major labor areas, 117 have unemployment rates of less than 6 percent -- the same number since November.

The February ratings are based on state employment security agencies' employment and unemployment reports for mid-December and on preliminary January figures.

"Substantial unemployment" means the area has a jobless rate of 6 percent or more, discounting seasonal or temporary factors, with the rate expected to continue for at least two or more months.

# # #

LABOR DEPARTMENT TO ACT
ON VINYL CHLORIDE HAZARD

WASHINGTON -- The Department of Labor has announced it will decide shortly whether to issue a temporary emergency standard or to proceed with normal rulemaking procedures in amending job health standards for the protection of employees exposed to vinyl chloride operations.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) held a public hearing Feb. 15 to obtain information on the uses and properties of vinyl chloride and on current work practices. The record of that hearing was held open for receipt of additional comments until March 8.

The hearing followed disclosure by officials of the B.F. Goodrich plant in Louisville, Ky., of a possible connection between vinyl chloride exposure and the deaths of four employees due to angiosarcoma -- a rare form of liver cancer. Two additional deaths subsequently have been reported.

"As soon as all hearing information is received and reviewed, we will decide which course of action to follow," John H. Stender, assistant secretary of labor who heads OSHA, said.

Stender explained that normal rulemaking procedures involve proposing a standard, seeking public comment, and holding public hearings, if requested. An emergency temporary standard could be issued after the hearing record is closed if it is determined that employees are exposed to "grave danger" from working with vinyl chloride and an emergency standard is necessary to protect employees. However, emergency standards remain in effect for only six months, while permanent standards, if any, are developed.

# # #

LABOR DEPARTMENT APPOINTMENTS

WASHINGTON -- The U.S. Department of Labor has announced recent appointments in programs involving veterans, workmen's compensation and job safety and health. They are:

-- Lewis D. Barton, director of the Veterans Employment Service (VES), Manpower Administration.

Barton will plan and direct a national program to provide job counseling, placement and training services to veterans, coordinating the efforts of the 2,400 local offices of the affiliated U.S. Employment Service.

-- Herbert A. Doyle, Jr., director of the Employment Standards Administration's Office of Workmen's Compensation Programs (OWCP).

Doyle is responsible for administering the three federal workmen's compensation laws: (1) the Federal Employees' Compensation Act and related laws (the War Hazards Compensation Act and the War Claims Act); (2) the Longshoremen's and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act and its various extensions (the Defense Base Act, Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, Nonappropriated Fund Instrumentalities Act, and District of Columbia Compensation Act), and (3) the "Black Lung" benefit payment provisions of the Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act of 1969, as amended by the Black Lung Benefits Act of 1972.

The OWCP is also responsible for developing and recommending standards for improving state workmen's compensation laws and for providing technical advice and assistance to the state governments in this area.

-- Irving I. Dobbins, consultant to the Labor Department's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). Dobbins will help develop a model cooperative program between labor and management which will help meet the objectives of OSHA. Dobbins and the OSHA staff will develop a model adaptable for use by labor-management groups in all parts of the country.

# # #

World of Work

Some Advice About Returning To Work

By PETER J. BRENNAN
Secretary of Labor

QUESTION: My children are grown and away at college now, and I'm considering returning to work. Could you give me some pointers on how to begin my job hunt? I'm a little concerned about finding a good job, since I've been a housewife for 19 years and am 45 years old.

ANSWER: The first thing for a mature woman to remember when looking for a job is that ability is ageless. Judgment, loyalty, reliability and a sense of responsibility are assets that employers recognize as characteristics of the mature person. Women seeking employment at a late age do have a special problem because of artificial age barriers often set by employers. But the Age Discrimination in Employment Act should improve your employment opportunities. This law prohibits employers, employment agencies or unions from rejecting or failing to refer otherwise qualified applicants to a job, solely because of age, when they are between 40 and 65 years old. Make your first stop the nearest office of the State Employment Service. The address is listed in the telephone directory under state government office listings. There is no charge for any services they provide, including counseling, testing, retraining and placement. Employment Service offices even have specialists who are attune to the needs of mature job seekers and maintain files on employers who have good records of hiring older workers. The U.S. Department of Labor Women's Bureau publishes a book entitled *Jobfinding Techniques for Mature Women*. It gives facts on how to prepare a resume and includes a guide to effective interviews and training organizations. To receive a copy, write the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. Each copy costs 30 cents.

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QUESTION: I've always been interested in a career in health services but don't want to go to medical or nursing school. What opportunities are there for me in related fields?

ANSWER: Opportunities in these fields are very good. Because of a shortage of professional health workers, there will be increasing opportunities for paraprofessional assistants to perform many of the routine but important tasks that now consume much of the professional's time. These new positions require relatively short training periods. Some paraprofessional occupations are: medical assistant, surgical technician, inhalation therapist, occupational therapist, occupational therapy assistant, optometric assistant and physical therapist. Contact your local state employment service office, hospital and area medical association for additional information on job training and placement.

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Editor's note: If you have a question regarding job training and placement, labor-management relations, job health and safety, equal employment opportunity, wages and hours, employment and unemployment, prices and earnings and other matters involving the U.S. Department of Labor, send it to:

Peter J. Brennan
Secretary of Labor
"World of Work"
U.S. Department of Labor
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Consumer

Help for Everyone In Your Home Town

By Virginia Knauer
Special Assistant to the President
and Director
Office of Consumer Affairs
Department of Health, Education and Welfare

Are you familiar with your Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service?

If not, you may be surprised to know that this is a remarkable government agency right in your home town—not way off in Washington or your state capital.

Even if you do know about the extension service, do you know it can help you get answers to a wide range of problems or questions, such as:

● Your azalea plant is suddenly looking droopy. How can you revive it?

● You have to shore up the foundation of an old center-city house that you are renovating. You need advice on soil conditions in the area.

● You are helping to organize a local day care center. You need to plan nutritious, thrifty and tasty meals for 50 children.

Yes, Cooperative Extension Service can handle all of these—and many, many more.

Wherever you live, a County or District Extension Office is there to serve you. There are more than 3,000 Extension Service offices in the nation. Each offers an almost unbelievable range of services.

You may call your local office for help with food and nutrition or with other consumer concerns, such as shopping, credit, housing and home crafts, including sewing, wood working, canning and freezing.

Extension Service offers energy conservation information, anti-pollution projects, youth programs set up by 4-H Clubs and community development plans for starting a small business, organizing a manpower training program and bringing doctors and a clinic to an isolated community. It also offers all sorts of gardening and farming assistance—for the city-dweller's potted geranium, the suburbanite's flower bed or the farmer's potato crop.

Although Cooperative Extensive Service started in 1914 to aid farm families, it has long since moved beyond farm areas to help people in cities and suburbs also.

The country's network of Extension Service offices represents the Federal level (U.S. Agriculture Department's Federal Extension Service), the state level (your state's land-grant university) and your local or county government. Each county or district office is staffed by specialists chosen to fill the needs of its own community.

You can usually find the office listed in your local telephone directory. Under the "County Government" listing, look for "Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service", "Cooperative Extension Service" or "Extension Service."

For more information about the extension program, write to the director of the State Extension Service at your state land-grant university, or write to Extension Service, Agriculture Department, Washington, D.C., 20250.

FILLERS FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Since responsibility for administering the Black Lung Benefits Act was transferred to the U.S. Labor Department in July 1973, compensation claims from coal mine workers have been received at the rate of some 200 a day.

* * *

Employees covered by the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) reported more than 112,000 new job-related injuries, diseases or deaths and filed more than 28,000 new claims for compensation with the U.S. Labor Department during the 1973 fiscal year 1973.

* * *

Federal workmen's compensation laws protect more than 5 million employees, including almost 3 million federal civilians, 500,000 maritime workers and 150,000 active coal miners.

* * *

Three out of every four of the nation's nonsupervisory employees, or approximately half of the 82 million Americans who work, must be paid at least $1.60 an hour by their employers, as required by the Fair Labor Standards Act.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20210

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